Sutton: Good afternoon. Today we are here to address two of the world’s most grave problems – overpopulation and poverty. These are surely not easy subjects to talk about, but ones we must address anyway. I am here with a witness.

Sutton: Can you tell me your name and occupation?

Shirley Ujest: My name is Shirley Ujest, I work for a top secret research company.

Sutton: Interesting… what kind of things do you do while your there?

Shirley Ujest: I go around the world and help out with different charities. I’ve seen the problems that exist, but we are doing all we can to help everyone we can out.

Sutton: Would you think that we are doing all we can to help prevent poverty in throughout the world?

Shirley Ujest: We may not be super-humans, and we also have to realize that there are far too many people living on this Earth, and we do all we can, we do have to keep in mind of the limited amount of resources we have.

Sutton: I understand, that 1.4 billion people live in poverty, and I totally understand that 6.9 billion people live on the Earth. Our Earth has many resources, but the more people we need to help, the more resources we’ll need too.

Shirley Ujest: I agree. An overpopulated world and limited amount of resources doesn’t make a good mix. But since we’re using everything we have, that means we are also doing all we can to help poverty.

Sutton: How do you feel about overpopulation?

Shirley Ujest: I think that its something you won’t be able to solve. People are born and die everyday, we can’t control any of that. Of course families can plan on how many children they want, but that could be from 2 kids to 8 kids. It wouldn’t be fair to take away someone’s life so that a newborn could live, and then repeating the cycle over.

Sutton: You’re right, it really wouldn’t make much sense. Our population is increasing rapidly, and some scientists are proposing that the Earth might not be able to support 10 billion people in the future because of how we treat our planet. How do you feel about that?

Shirley Ujest: I think that if we haven’t done anything before about all these people, that must mean that we’ve done everything we can about the subject. 10 billion people Is a lot, but if we think back to the time when our population nearly doubled within 10-30 years, it just keeps happening, the Earth is handling this situation very well.

Sutton: If the Earth can double so quickly, then your proposing idea is most likely correct. Do you think the Earth won’t be able to support so many people cause of the damage we cause each and everyday?

Shirley Ujest: Well thank goodness we have projects for cleaning up our earth, and projects for “going green”. I do believe that the more people this Earth supports, the more pollution it will have to put up with.

Sutton: Have you done any projects about this pollution?

Shriley Ujest: I actually have. We’ve gone out to places and talked to industries and they’ve changed a lot. I mean now we have more “green” cleaning supplies, we can count on finding a recycle bin around the corner, its really a big change. I mean before we were throwing away and wasting all this paper, and now we don’t have to worry about wasting. I definately believe the idea that we are doing all we can, and that overpopulation is something you can’t solve by yourself,

Sutton: Yes. Do you only work on poverty related things in your top research company? Or do you also focus on environmental issues, biodiversity, economy, and employment issues?

Shirley Ujest: We go into those aspects as well. Over 1 billion people in the world are starving, but sadly enough, another 1 billion suffer from obesity. At least 80% of the world lives on less than $10 a day. Some 1.1 billion people in developing countries have inadequate access to water, and 2.6 billion lack basic sanitation.

Sutton: Those are certainly some depressing facts.

Shirley Ujest: And that’s not all. According to UNICEF, 22,000 children die each day due to poverty, and that the poorest 40 percent of the world’s population accounts for 5 percent of global income. The richest 20 percent accounts for three-quarters of world income. Less than one per cent of what the world spent every year on weapons was needed to put every child into school by the year 2000 and yet it didn’t happen.

Sutton: What are some causes of poverty?

Shirley Ujest: Basically they chalk down to ignorance, disease, apathy, dishonesty, and, probably the most important, dependency.

Sutton: Tell me more about what causes poverty.

Shirley: Well, ignorance means having a lack of information, or lack of knowledge. It is different from stupidity which is lack of intelligence, and different from foolishness which is lack of wisdom. The three are often mixed up and assumed to be the same by some people. But ignorant people can’t help it. We need to get more people aware of this problem. Disease cripples many people and makes them unable to work, or people unwilling to hire them, or if a family member gets sick you’d have to take care of them. Apathy is when people do not care, or when they feel so powerless that they do not try to change things, to right a wrong, to fix a mistake, or to improve conditions. Lots of people are apathetic towards the issue of poverty. Dishonesty can mean either lying about conditions or using resources for their own good instead of the poor. And dependency is when people become too dependent on something and then when it is taken away, they have nowhere to go.

Sutton: What can be done to stop poverty?

Shirley Ujest: Well, we have to make sure we stop poverty by reversing the reasons that it exists: we need to gain knowledge, proper access to health and medicine, showing people they can and need to help, honesty, and independency.

Sutton: What can every day people do to help stop poverty?

Shirley Ujest: There’s a very nice website set up by the United Nations World Food Programme called Free Rice. It asks you academic questions, and for every answer you get right, the World Food Programme gives 10 grains of rice to poverty-struck families in the Third World. I urge you to check it out.

Sutton: Are we doing enough?

Shirley Ujest: Yes, most definitely. There are organizations like the World Food Programme that are helping, but there really is only so much we can do. Think about it – if we go in and give free food to Third World countries, the price of food in the entire nation will drop. We don’t need to hold the hands of poorer countries, we need to give them the resources and let them help themselves because dependency only breeds more misery and poverty and the cycle just goes on.

Sutton: Excellent point. Well, thank you for coming in Shirley.

Shirley Ujest: Thanks for inviting me.

Sutton: Have a nice day.

Shirley: You too.